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International Public Opinion.

The Kishineff massacre and the attempted petition of Jewish leaders and others in this country to the Russian government have brought to the front the whole question of international public opinion, its rights, duties and limitations, as has rarely been the case.

The existence and rapid growth of an international public opinion, with a corresponding evolution of international conscience, is one of the most patent facts of the day. The time has passed when any nation can live to itself. All governments and peoples now walk in the white light of universal observation and judgment. Concealment is no longer possible. Severe passport regulations and censorships count for little. What is said in secret is uttered on the housetops. In all parts of the world men learn quickly of the important occurrences in other quarters, and then think and speak and write about them with the utmost sincerity and freedom, often with a great deal more frankness and fairness than of nearby events.

This freedom of discussion of foreign affairs is not a mere accidental result of the new and swift methods of intercommunication. These merely furnish the occasion for its exercise. It is a natural social right of

human nature. It is also a solemn duty. The interests of particular nations and of humanity demand it. There is nothing much worse for a nation than to live under its own eyes alone.

Governments also have a right to consider and pass judgment upon the actions and policies of other governments, though of course the exercise of the right is a most delicate task, and meddlesomeness in the affairs of other governments is never justified. International law already recognizes this right in extreme cases of disorder and wrong doing. How far, if at all, it may be expedient to use the right under particular circumstances, how it should be done, and under what limitations, may very properly be open to question. But of the right and the duty, speaking in general terms, there can be no doubt.

The Jewish leaders and others in this country who have sought by appeal to the Russian government to secure more favorable treatment of the Jews in the Czar's dominions have been entirely within their right. The circumstances amply justified them in what they did. The attempt of our government to aid these petitioners in a matter of so grave character has also been entirely proper. The government — the President and Congress — would have been fully warranted in sending a memorial on its own motion, if its own skirts had been sufficiently spotless at home.

Russia has declined to receive the petition, though its moral effect has probably not been on that account in any way diminished. Not only the authorities at St. Petersburg, but every persecuted Hebrew and every sufferer from whatever injustice in Russia, will learn of the voice in behalf of justice that came out of the West. And von Plehve, or whoever was responsible for permitting the massacre, cannot prevent it. The only ground on which the Czar's government can justify itself in refusing the remonstrance is that it was in no way responsible for the crime, and that it is doing everything in its power to bring the perpetrators to judgment. This justification is offered, and we sincerely hope it may be made good, though the evidence accumulates that at least the Minister of the Interior was as guilty in the affair as the governor of Bessarabia, whom the Czar summarily dismissed.

The tendency on the part of both peoples and governments to resent the exercise of this right of foreign intervention of opinion grows out of the old national exclusiveness of the days when nations knew little